

THE SECOND SUNDAY BEFORE ADVENT
(15.11.2020)

INTRODUCTORY HYMN

Praise, my soul, the King of heaven;
to his feet thy tribute bring.
ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,
who like thee his praise should sing?
Praise him! Praise him!
Praise the everlasting King!

Praise him for his grace and favour
to our fathers in distress;
praise him, still the same for ever,
slow to chide, and swift to bless.
Praise him! Praise him!
Glorious in his faithfulness.

Father-like, he tends and spares us;
well our feeble frame he knows;
in his hands he gently bears us,
rescues us from all our foes.
Praise him! Praise him!
Widely as his mercy flows.

Henry Francis Lyte (1793-1847)

GREETING

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.
and also with you.

Hold out your hands, God of grace,
and receive all that we offer.
Take our lives, our love
and all that we bring in faith today,
and use us and our gifts
for the well-being of the world.
Amen.

WELCOME

PRAYERS

A prayer of approach

We come to you, gracious God,
we who have many talents and we who have few;
we who have much confidence and we who have little.
We come not just to give and to receive,
we come because you call us and believe in us.
We come in gratitude and in awe.
We come in Jesus' name. Amen.

A prayer of confession

Forgive us, Lord, when we have not trusted our gifts
because we have not trusted you.
When we have been cautious in our own strength,
not confident in yours.
Forgive us and help us to help one another
to be the people you know that we can be.
Amen.

Assurance of forgiveness

In our brokenness
and in our humanness,
the Christ is one with us.
In Christ we are set free.
In Christ we are enough to be the Church.
Amen.

COLLECT

Righteous God, our merciful master,
you own the earth and all its peoples,
and you give us all that we have.
Inspire us to serve you with justice and wisdom,
and prepare us for the joy of the day of your coming,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

READINGS

Psalm 90: 1-12

God's Eternity and Human Frailty
A Prayer of Moses, the man of God.

Lord, you have been our dwelling-place
in all generations.
Before the mountains were brought forth,
or ever you had formed the earth and the world,
from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

You turn us back to dust,
and say, 'Turn back, you mortals.'
For a thousand years in your sight
are like yesterday when it is past,
or like a watch in the night.

You sweep them away; they are like a dream,
like grass that is renewed in the morning;
in the morning it flourishes and is renewed;
in the evening it fades and withers.

For we are consumed by your anger;
by your wrath we are overwhelmed.
You have set our iniquities before you,
our secret sins in the light of your countenance.

For all our days pass away under your wrath;
our years come to an end like a sigh.
The days of our life are seventy years,
or perhaps eighty, if we are strong;
even then their span is only toil and trouble;
they are soon gone, and we fly away.

Who considers the power of your anger?
Your wrath is as great as the fear that is due to you.
So teach us to count our days
that we may gain a wise heart.

Matthew 25: 14-30

'For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away.

The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.

After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, "Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents." His master said to him, "Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master." And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, "Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents." His master said to him, "Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master." Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, "Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours."

But his master replied, "You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents.

For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

REFLECTION

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Let us affirm our faith together:

**We believe in God the Father,
from whom every family
in heaven and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,
who lives in our hearts through faith,
and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us
with power from on high.**

**We believe in one God;
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

We pray to God, who is always ready –
for those overtaken with demands.

Give respite, O Lord.

For those overburdened with anxieties.

Give rest, O Lord.

For those overcome with debt.

Give relief, O Lord.

For those oppressed by powers that despise them.

Give salvation, O Lord.

For those in situations they cannot see a way out of.

Give freedom, O Lord.

For those in need of hope.

Give hope, O Lord. Amen.

THE PEACE

God is love
and those who live in love live in God
and God lives in them.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.
And also with you.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

As our Saviour taught his disciples, so we pray:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.**

BLESSING

May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you,
wherever he may send you.
May he guide you through the wilderness,
and protect you through the storm.
May he bring you home rejoicing
at the wonders he has shown you.
May he bring you home rejoicing
once again into our doors.
Amen.

In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

NOTICES

CLOSING HYMN

Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart,
be all else but nought to me, save that thou art;
be thou my best thought in the day and the night,
both waking and sleeping, thy presence my light.

Be thou my wisdom, be thou my true word,
be thou ever with me, and I with thee, Lord;
be thou my great Father, thy child let me be;
be thou in me dwelling, and I one with thee.

Riches I need not, nor earth's empty praise,
be thou mine inheritance now and always;
be thou, and thou only, the first in my heart,
O Sovereign of heaven, my treasure thou art!

Irish, 8th century
translated by Mary Elizabeth Byrne (1880-1931)
versified by Eleanor Henrietta Hull (1860-1935) (*alt.*)

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